

I would argue the most important national goal for our country would be to make sure all children—no matter income or color of skin or rural or urban or boy or girl, by the time they go to kindergarten, through a combination of public sector investment, private sector help, volunteers—have been read to widely, all these children know the alphabet and know colors and shapes and sizes, and they know how to spell their name and they have been challenged and there have been people to nurture them and to support them.

We are not doing that. So I say to the Chair—he is a Republican—I am actually being more critical of Democrats. I am starting to think the policy debate goes like this. Republicans say when it comes to the most pressing issues of working families' lives, like affordable child care, the President says we want health care coverage for citizens—but this budget does not provide that. It does not take us anywhere near universal health care coverage. So Republicans say universal health care coverage, affordable child care, investment in children—listen, when it comes to these issues, there is not that much the Government can or should do.

I understand that. That is a legitimate ideology or point of view. Although, frankly, I think it works best for people who own their own large corporations and are wealthy. I don't think it works for most of the people.

The President says: No, we care about children. We are going to invest in children. We are going to have universal health care coverage. We are going to have economic security for the elderly. We are going to make sure no child is in poverty. But then what we say is: But, politically, we cannot make the investment because then it will look as if we are spending too much. In which case, frankly, the differences between the two parties don't make a heck of a lot of difference to a lot of our most vulnerable citizens.

So I wanted to come to the floor, first of all, to congratulate former Secretary Bob Reich for raising questions about the priorities of the President's budget and all the money that is being put into debt reduction. You can and should put some money into debt reduction. But do you know what else? It would seem to me we also want to make sure we do well for children right now. In the next century, we are going to be asking them to carry an awful lot on their shoulders. We know there are a lot of children we are not doing very well by. My question is, in the words of Rabbi Hillel, his third century admonition: "If not now, when?"

If we Democrats do not start speaking up for children and talk about the need to invest in children and to invest in pre-K and get it right by way of developmental child care—which should be huge, it should be all over the coun-

try and there should be resources—if we do not speak up for children, Democrats, and for investment in early childhood education, then who will?

"If not now, when?"

I think I have run out of time. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MURKOWSKI). The Senator from Nevada.

CAPITOL HILL POLICE SECURITY

Mr. REID. Before the Senator from Minnesota leaves the floor, I would like to have a brief colloquy with the Senator.

I say to my friend, I have watched very closely your public statement regarding law enforcement on Capitol Hill. I want to be as direct and forthright as I can be in underscoring the work you have done. I think I am the only U.S. Senator who has served as a Capitol policeman. I worked, when I went to law school, on the night shift and went to law school in the daytime. I think I have some familiarity with what the Capitol Police go through.

I have to acknowledge and admit the work they do today, compared to when I was a Capitol policeman more than 30 years ago, is much more dangerous, much more terrorist threatened. They face many more dangers than I have. I said on many occasions the most dangerous assignment I had was directing traffic. But the fact of the matter is, I carried a gun and was responsible for maintaining the safety and security of the U.S. Capitol. I am very proud of that. I still have my badge that I carried. I still have that in my office in the Hart Building.

The Senator from Minnesota has recognized that these men and women work in harm's way every day. What the Senator from Minnesota has stated is when we have these doors, and these men and women are there alone, it is dangerous. Two of our law enforcement officers were killed as a result of a terrorist act, the act of a madman. I think the people who maintain the Capitol Police should come to us. We are in an appropriations cycle. If they need more money, let them tell us they need more money. We are in a period of time where we need to get the real facts.

I say also to my friend from Minnesota, I am very concerned we have waited all these many years and we still do not have a visitors center.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Yes.

Mr. REID. We have taxpaying people who come to the U.S. Capitol and spend hours standing in the cold and the heat waiting to get in, without the opportunity to use a bathroom. There are no parking facilities around here, so they have all had to walk or take public transportation for a long period of time.

I think it is below the dignity of the United States of America that people wanting to visit this beautiful Capitol

do not have a place where they can come and have a soft drink, a cup of coffee, a doughnut, or go to the bathroom. That is also a law enforcement issue. One of the reasons these Capitol policemen who protect us and the American public are threatened every day is because we don't have a visitors center where people can be screened, away from these doors.

So I commend, I applaud the Senator from Minnesota for standing up for the American public and basically standing up for these people who have no voice, the Capitol Police who protect us.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, if I might respond to my colleague, I appreciate his words. I think he is right. Senator REID from Nevada is actually the only Senator who actually served on the Capitol Police.

I think on the question of appropriations, you are right. This is timely. My own view is the police have a union so they do have a voice. This is, of course, new. I think the union leadership is very involved. I also say Sergeant at Arms Zeiglar has been very good about this and he thinks this is unacceptable and has to change. I don't think there is any question, whether it is an appropriations matter or whether it is reprogramming and having enough overtime pay so people can staff up that way, I don't know the answer. But I do know this, I think my colleague would agree, I don't believe any Senator or Representative can credibly say to the Capitol Hill police, these law enforcement officers: No, we can't spend the additional resources. It costs too much to make sure there is the security for them and the public. We cannot say that.

My God, we have gone through a living hell here. If you think of Officer Chestnut and think of Agent Gibson and think of their families, I think the commitment we made to one another—of course, you could never come up with a 100-percent certainty that you could prevent this from happening again. But we want to do everything we can.

I appreciate what the Senator from Nevada said because it is true. When you have these posts, especially when there are lots of people coming in, you cannot have one officer there. I appreciate the Senator from Nevada speaking out on this. The Capitol Police—I did not expect it necessarily would be this way, but everywhere I have gone the last couple of days people have come up and been very gracious and said: Thank you very much for doing it.

I think they feel in their hearts that it is important to get the support. For the Senator from Nevada to come out here and speak makes a big difference. I thank him.

Mr. REID. If I may also say to my friend before he leaves the Chamber, I

hope it is more than just talk. I acknowledge Mr. Ziglar is doing a wonderful job, and I appreciate that. But I want him to come forward with a program to accomplish what we need accomplished. After the two officers were murdered at a door coming into the Capitol, protecting us, there was a hue and cry that we had to start construction of a visitor's center.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Yes.

Mr. REID. Isn't it interesting, the colder they get in their graves, the less talk there is about trying to take care of that problem. Had it been there, their lives would not have been snuffed out.

I am so appreciative of the Senator speaking out for people who have no voice.

Mr. WELLSTONE. I thank the Senator.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1999—Continued

Mr. REID. Mr. President, it is my understanding the matter before the Senate today is the amendments to the Nuclear Policy Act of 1999; is that the matter we are on?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada is correct.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, when I was a young man, I used to box. I fought in the ring. I can remember as a 20-year-old, I thought I was in pretty good shape. I weighed 160 pounds or thereabouts. I had trained for a fight near the place where they were building the Glen Canyon Dam, which forms Lake Powell. I was ready to go and had trained for this fight. I arrived there and was told the opponent was not going to fight, so I would not be able to fight that night. I was very disappointed.

A manager came out and said: We have somebody here who could fight you, but he has no experience. I know how badly you would like to fight, so if you agree to kind of take it easy on him, I will go ahead and let him fight. He is a little bigger than you are, but I am sure everything will be fine if you take it easy on him.

Mr. President, he worked me over really good. It was one of the worst beatings I ever took. It was the first time I had ever had broken ribs from a fight.

The reason I mention this story is, I have learned since then that if you are going to have a fight, you have to

know the rules, you have to know whom you are fighting. Ever since then, I have never gotten into a fight unless I pretty well understood who the opponent was.

With the matter now before the Senate, I am having some difficulty finding out who the opponent is. We had been told there was going to be an amendment last Friday. We got an amendment last Friday, but it was not the one we thought it was going to be.

I say to everyone within the sound of my voice, whatever happens in the Senate these next few days on the matter that is now before the Senate, S. 1287, it is not the bill that directs nuclear waste to go to the State of Nevada. If nothing happens in this Chamber regarding S. 1287, as we speak, there is characterization taking place at Yucca Mountain to determine if, in fact, Yucca Mountain is suitable for a nuclear repository. At a time subsequent, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission will make a determination as to whether or not Yucca Mountain is suitable to be licensed.

It does not matter what we do today, tomorrow, the next day, or whenever we finish S. 1287. Characterization is still taking place; the decision on licensing the site is up to the NRC.

What is happening in S. 1287 is the same thing that has happened in the last 4 or 5 years with interim storage. The very powerful nuclear industry wants to short-circuit the system, wants to do an end run around the system, wants to speed up the disposal of nuclear waste. Good sense dictated, and the President of the United States said he would veto the interim storage bill.

As a result, interim storage is no longer an issue we are debating, for that I am very grateful. I appreciate the chairman of the full committee taking another approach. That approach is S. 1287. I say to everyone in the Senate and others within the sound of my voice that S. 1287, unfortunately, is still an attempt to short-circuit the system. It is not the mass outage that interim storage would have caused, but it is still a short-circuit.

What does this bill do? Originally, the main purpose was to take the Environmental Protection Agency out of the business of setting standards for radiation at Yucca Mountain. Again, the President issued a veto statement and said: If that is in there, I am going to veto this bill.

There have been conversations between the chairman and the ranking member that that is going to be taken out of the legislation and EPA will still be in the driver's seat. We were told just the other day one of the standards in it was, you could not take nuclear waste through Colorado. We understand that may be taken out of the bill.

The point I am making is this, we do not yet know what the vehicle is. We

do not yet know whom we are going to be fighting. By the way, the man I fought in Kanab, Utah was named Swaderski. I never forget that name. I do not know if this is a Swaderski or it is something else. Until the Senators from Nevada and the rest of the Senate have an idea of what is going to be the vehicle we are going to be debating, what the amendment is, we are at a real loss as to how we should proceed.

We have other problems with S. 1287, but the main problem is with the nuclear radiation standards we have talked about.

There are all kinds of things which at the right time we can talk about in some detail—about radiation protection, what the standard should be. What we have not talked about at all, and which we certainly need to talk about, is not only the radiation standard generally, but a radiation standard for children.

For example, I did a lot of work on lead abatement. Lead in the environment is dangerous to adults, but not as dangerous and it is disastrous to children. Little children's nervous systems cannot take lead. Most of the work we did with lead abatement was directed toward children.

As with lead, radiation more drastically affects children than it does adults, and this is something about which we will have the opportunity to speak at a subsequent time—the risk to children.

We are learning a lot about ground water protection as it relates to radiation. We know that ground water must be protected. There is such a shortage of it in Nevada and especially in the Yucca Mountain area. We want to make sure that ground water which we believe flows into the Amargosa aquifer is something that is not going to be damaged.

We know during the last 3 years we have had a significant number of very serious earthquakes at Yucca Mountain. We can talk about this in some detail, but it is something that goes to the ultimate licensing of this repository.

The cost of the program is in the billions of dollars. We were told originally it would cost \$200 million to do the characterization for three sites, a total of \$600 million. For just Yucca Mountain alone, we are now over \$7 billion for the characterization. There has been a loss of confidence. We have various organizations that are concerned.

I have heard people come to the Senate floor and talk about, how they are taking care of nuclear waste in Europe. That is really not quite true. They are having all kinds of difficulty transporting the nuclear waste. Of course, those are very small countries. Here in the United States, we are talking about transporting nuclear waste not